Yet was this, as Cicero[a] long since observed, a most heterogeneous patch, or *assumentum* of his, and altogether as contradictious to the tenor of his own principles, as it was to the doctrine of Democritus himself. There can be nothing more absurd, than for an Atheist to assert liberty of will; but, it is most of all absurd, for an Atomic one. And, therefore, our modern Atheists do here plainly disclaim Epicurus, (though otherwise so much admired by them,) and declare open war against this liberty of will; they apprehending,, that it would unavoidably introduce; incorporeal substance; as also well knowing, that necessity, on the contrary, effectually overthrows all religion, it taking away guilt and blame, punishments and rewards; to which might be added also prayers and devotions.

And as there was a necessity for us here, to give some account of that ancient Atomic physiology, with which Atheism now became thus blended and complicated; so do we, in this first chapter, chiefly insist upon two things concerning it. First, that it was no invention of Democritus nor Leucippus, but of much greater antiquity; not only from that tradition transmitted by Posido-nius, the Stoic, that it derived its original from one Moschus, a Phoenician, who lived before the Tro^ jan wars, (which plainly makes it to have been Mosaical;) but also from Aristotle's affirmation, that the greater part of the ancient philosophers entertained this hypothesis ; and further, because it is certain, that divers of the Italics, and particularly Ernpedocles, before Democritus, physio-logized atornically, which is the reason he was so

*** De Nat. Deor. 1. i, c. 25.**